

OJAI HEALING ESSENTIALS NEWSLETTER

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Newsletter Topics:

- **History, Description, and Uses of Sweet Marjoram Essential Oil**
- **Fall Aromatherapy Classes**
- **Special Offer: “Be at Peace” Nasal Inhaler**

Sweet Marjoram Essential Oil: If you are not familiar with Sweet Marjoram you will know its cousin Oregano. The essential oil of Sweet Marjoram has been found to have many wonderful properties that have an effect on almost all the body systems.

Botany of Sweet Marjoram (*Origanum marjorana*):



Marjoram is thought to have originated in Asia but is now grown all over Europe. There has been confusion throughout history between Sweet Marjoram and Oregano as the plants look very much alike and are from the same family with very similar botanical names. However, they are very different; especially the essential oils.

There are 2 major varieties of Marjoram: Sweet Marjoram also known as Knotted Marjoram (*Origanum marjorana*, *Marjoram hortensis*), and Pot Marjoram (*Origanum onites*). It grows as a small shrub 1 foot in height with red stems and hairy grey-green oval leaves. Cluster of small pink, white or mauve flowers appear from June to Sept. Sweet Marjoram (*Origanum marjorana*) is the one distilled as an essential oil.

Marjoram (*Origanum marjorana*.)



Oregano (*Origanum vulgare*) essential oil has different properties and will be discussed in a future newsletter. Both Marjoram and Oregano plants have clusters of white and mauve flowers.

To make it even more confusing there is Spanish Marjoram (*Thymus mastichina*) which is not a species of Marjoram at all, but is a species of Thyme. This is why it is so important to know the botanical name when purchasing essential oils.

What's the difference? For now we will say that Sweet Marjoram is delicate, sweet and floral, while Oregano is zesty, peppery, and lemony.

Oregano (*Origanum vulgare*)

History of Marjoram

The plant and essential oil of Sweet Marjoram has been used since the ancient past for food and healing purposes. It has always been considered sacred in India. The ancient Greeks called Marjoram “joy of the mountain,” and they commonly used it to create wreaths and garlands for both weddings and funerals. Dioscorides made a pomade using Sweet Marjoram called “amaricinum” for nervous disorders. Pliny prescribed it for stomach disorders and to relieve flatulence. In ancient Egypt, it was used medicinally for healing and disinfecting. It was also used for food preservation.



The Italian Medical School of Salerno, correctly classified Sweet Marjoram as an antispasmodic and expectorant in the 9th Century.

For centuries, both Sweet Majoram and Oregano have been used as healing teas. During the Middle Ages, European women used the herb in nosegays (a small flower bouquet, typically given as a gift). Sachets were made for chest infections, and Majoram mixed with honey was taken for coughs. Sweet marjoram was also a popular culinary herb in Europe and was used in cakes, puddings and porridge.

SEE BELOW: MONTHLY SPECIAL

Sweet Marjoram Essential Oil Description: Pale yellow mobile liquid. **Method of extraction:** steam distilled from the flower heads. **Aroma:** reminiscent of camphor, thyme, and cardamom with a bit of a peppery note.



Note: middle. **Chemical composition:** contains over 50% monoterpenols which lend a pleasant relaxing aroma; and 50% monoterpenes that contribute to its decongestant properties.

Blends well with: Sweet Marjoram’s herbaceous scent goes well with lavender, coriander, nutmeg, helichrysum, cypress, chamomile, cedarwood, bergamot, thyme, tea tree, sandalwood, lemongrass and eucalyptus.

Properties of Sweet Marjoram: Anti-bacterial, Anti-fungal, Anti-histiminic, **Anti-inflammatory**. Analgesic, **Anti-spasmodic**, Hypotensive. **CNS Sedative**, Muscle relaxant, Expectorant, Digestive.

Caution: Davis warns against abusing the sedative properties of Sweet Marjoram as it can dull the senses and cause drowsiness; and in large amounts is stupefying.

Therapeutic Uses of Sweet Marjoram Essential Oil

Note Antimicrobial Properties: "Sweet Marjoram essential oil showed inhibitory activity against various pathogenic bacteria and fungi, including *Beneckea natriegens*, *Erwinia carotovera*, *Moraxella*, *Aspergillus*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Streptococcus pyogenes*, *Bacillus cereus*, *B subtilis*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Salmonella poona*, *Escherichia coli*, and dermatophytes."

Journal of Evidence Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine. January 2017, p175-185.

Circulatory: Hypotensive: an effective vasodilator and warming properties improve circulation and lower blood pressure.

Gastrointestinal: Stimulates and strengthens peristalsis. Due to its antiseptic properties, S M oil is an effective mouthwash to relieve gum disease. Dilute 1 drop of oil in 2 cups of warm water and rinse.

Musculoskeletal: Warming and analgesic with excellent antispasmodic properties. Effective to relieve muscular spasm, sprains, and strains, joint pain and neuralgia.

Nervous System: Very effective as a CNS sedative. Relieves nervous tension and insomnia that comes from too much stress and overactive Autonomic Nervous System (the fight or flight reaction). According to Tisserand, it stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system and lowers the sympathetic function, normalizing the nervous system. To relieve stress and insomnia add 5 drops of Sweet Marjoram and 2 drops of Orange oil to a warm bath. Follow with a massage blend of 8 drops of SM and 6 drops of Orange in 15 ml (½ ounce) of carrier oil. To relieve headaches rub Sweet Marjoram rub a few drops into temples. A nasal inhaler can be effective to relieve insomnia. See Monthly Special "Be at Peace" Anti-Stress Inhaler Below.

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Respiratory: Sweet Marjoram is highly anti-microbial and has been used since antiquity for respiratory ailments. With 50 % monoterpenes that contribute to Sweet Marjoram's decongestant properties, it can be used in salves for a chest rub to relieve cough.

Reproductive: Sweet Marjoram tea is well known as the women's remedy for PMS. A 2016 double blind study published in *The Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics* revealed the positive effects of Marjoram tea for balancing female hormones. A warm compress with the essential oil can relieve menstrual cramps.

Emotional: Sweet Marjoram is comforting to those who are suffering from grief and / or loneliness.

Culinary: Marjoram has been used in cooking as an herbal seasoning for centuries.



Safety: As with all essential oils, safety should always be a concern before use. Though rare, some people with sensitive skin may experience itching, stinging, redness or other forms of skin irritation with the application of Sweet Marjoram oil. It's best to first test a small amount on the inside of your forearm to check for any allergic reactions to the oil.

People with medical conditions like epilepsy should first ask their physician or health care provider if the oil is safe to use. Pregnant women should also avoid using Sweet Marjoram oil since it can alter the balance of hormones during pregnancy.

Remember that it's always best to dilute any essential oil before using. Marjoram oil is safe to use internally, however, it **should be diluted with at least 4 ounces of liquid (half a cup) for every drop of the oil.** Marjoram oil can be blended with other oils to increase its potency when used for various purposes.

Ojai Healing Essentials Aromatherapy Classes

A series of 3 classes will be presented at the beautiful Ojai Retreat Center, approximately 1 class a month, beginning in October. Class I, an Introduction to Aromatherapy, is scheduled for Sunday October 14. Class II, a Blending Workshop, is scheduled for Saturday, November 10. Class III on Medical Aromatherapy as related to anatomy and physiology will be scheduled in January or February, 2019. Watch for Class I flyer in the next week or two.



MONTHLY SPECIAL

“Be at Peace” Nasal Inhaler \$10.00

Relieves anxiety, promotes calmness, slightly sedative to relax for sleep.

Contains Essential Oils of Clary Sage, Lavender, Sweet Marjoram, Sweet Orange, Cardamom, Sandalwood.

Comes with extra cotton wick and 2.3 ml of essential oil blend (approx. 50 drops).

Two inhalations 2-3 X's a day; don't overdo.

September is here. Back to school children will be exposing each other to viruses and bringing them home. Add a few drops of Bergamot and the highly anti-microbial Sweet Marjoram essential oils to your diffuser and keep it running off and on daily. Teach your family to wash hands more frequently. May all stay well and enjoy a beautiful fall season.

Patricia Wing, RN, IAC, Clinical Aromatherapist

References

1. The Complete Guide to Aromatherapy, by Battaglia, S., P. 42, 228-230, 321.
2. The Complete Illustrated Guide to Aromatherapy, by Julia Lawless, P. 134-136.
4. The Healing Intelligence of Essential Oils, K.Schnaubelt, PhD. P. 134-136.
5. Essential Oil Safety 2nd Edition, Robert Tisserand, Robert Young, P. 357
6. Aromatherapy: A to Z, Davis, Patricia, P.212, 1999..